

assist orphans and vulnerable children. In that vein, I urge all of my colleagues to recognize World AIDS Orphans Day and join me in supporting swift passage of PEPFAR so that we can continue to meet the needs of millions of children around the world who desperately need our help.

COMMEMORATING PRESIDENT
HEYDAR ALIYEV

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 7, 2008

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, on May 10, we commemorate the 85th Jubilee of the late President Heydar Aliyev. President Aliyev's significant contributions to the country of Azerbaijan provided a fertile ground for the seeds of democracy to flourish after Soviet rule and have paved the road for Azerbaijan's regional and international success.

Azerbaijan is the gateway to Central Asia. It is on the modern Silk Road which transports goods and services from China through Central Asian countries, Azerbaijan, and Georgia. Remarkably, with only 19 years of independence, Azerbaijan has become a key player in this region. After brief independence from 1918–1920, Azerbaijan fell under Russian domination for 70 years. When Soviet troops invaded Baku on January 20, 1990, many died, including innocent civilians, thereby giving birth to the independence movement in the country.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the emergence of a democratic Azerbaijan Republic, the first few years were not easy. While Azerbaijan became the first former Soviet Republic outside the Baltic States with no foreign troops on its soil, it was a small country with powerful neighbors. Mindful of its geography, Azerbaijan developed close ties with the United States, Western Europe, Turkey, and Israel.

In 1993, Heydar Aliyev became President of the Republic, first by appointment under the constitution, then through direct election. A cease-fire in the war with Armenia over the Nagorno Karabakh region of Azerbaijan was negotiated and implemented in 1994. During this time, the country's economy was wrecked by war and burdened by the effects of communism. Parliament began enacting laws to make the country friendlier to foreign investment and a member of the international market economy.

In 1994, the "Contract of the Century" was signed between American and western companies and Azerbaijan. The Contract was designed to allow Azerbaijan to develop its energy resources in order to diversify western energy supplies. The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline (supported by both the Clinton and Bush Administrations) is now fully operational, and helps to bolster the political and commercial independence of the countries in the region, while diversifying Europe's energy supplies.

President Aliyev was clear regarding Azerbaijan's western orientation. Azerbaijan joined NATO's Partnership for Peace Program in 1994, and has consistently integrated into the Euro-Atlantic security architecture; further

deepening U.S.-Azerbaijani military to military cooperation.

Azerbaijan works with the U.S., both bilaterally and multilaterally, through the GUAM framework (Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova) to prevent illegal trafficking and to secure borders. A strong friend of the United States, President Heydar Aliyev offered support for the fight against terrorism immediately after 9/11. Today Azerbaijani troops are in Iraq and Afghanistan with the coalition.

Azerbaijan has excellent relations with Israel and a 2,000 year old Jewish community with representation in Parliament. As a secular country with a predominantly Shiia population, the participation of its troops in Iraq and Afghanistan sends the right message regarding international cooperation.

Because of the late President Aliyev's efforts, today Azerbaijan is a developing democracy with a growing and vibrant economy. There are no longer any doubts regarding the viability of this Republic. The future of U.S.-Azerbaijani relations is bright, as our two countries share values and interests in the region.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 175TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF SYLACAUGA

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 7, 2008

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Madam Speaker, I respectfully ask the attention of the House today to pay recognition the members of First Baptist Church of Sylacauga, Alabama, who on May 25 will celebrate their congregation's 175th anniversary.

On May 25, 1833, George Hill sought the approval of the Tallasahatchie Church to establish a new branch in what would become Sylacauga, Alabama. The small wooden cabin that first served as a meeting place for the church's eight charter members became an independent church in 1835 with 33 members.

Since that time, the church has grown steadily becoming one of the many fixtures of the Sylacauga community. The celebration on May 25 will help pay tribute to the work of First Baptist Church on behalf of its members and community.

I am pleased to recognize the First Baptist Church of Sylacauga today for reaching this important milestone in the history of their congregation, and wish its members all the best in its next 175 years of faith and witnessing in the community.

HONORING DEAN TIPPS

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 7, 2008

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Madam Speaker, today I rise along with my fellow Members of Congress ANNA ESHOO, SAM FARR, MIKE HONDA, BARBARA LEE, DORIS MATSUI, JIM MCNERNEY, GEORGE MILLER, JACKIE SPEIER, PETE STARK, ELLEN TAUSCHER, MIKE

THOMPSON, and LYNN WOOLSEY to congratulate Dean Tipps on his retirement and to honor a man whose career of over 40 years has been dedicated to empowering and bettering the lives of working men and women.

For the last 22 years, Dean Tipps has been executive director of the California State Council of the Service Employees International Union. In this capacity, he has directed the council's statewide legislative and political activities on behalf of the 650,000 California members of the Service Employees International Union. As the director of the largest union in California, Dean Tipps' impact has reached beyond SEIU membership as the growth, innovation, and persistent advocacy of the SEIU has served as an example to other unions in a variety of industries.

Mr. Tipps' vision, leadership, and strategic thinking have had a substantial impact on California's people and politics over the last few decades. Dean's ability to build coalitions and bring together the necessary resources has meant that working people have had a powerful voice in electoral and legislative arenas. Dean Tipps has been a leader in many of the labor movement's victories in California, including the defeat of State Proposition 226, the election of Gray Davis, and labor's special election victories in 2005.

He began his political work in 1976 as the first legislative advocate for the California Tax Reform Association and was deeply involved in the politics of California's property tax revolt. In 1979, he moved to Washington, D.C., to become the founding executive director of Citizens for Tax Justice. At CTJ, Mr. Tipps developed the successful campaign strategy that defeated Howard Jarvis' Proposition 9 in 1980 and was involved in initiative campaigns in Massachusetts, Ohio, and other States. He subsequently went to work for the Service Employees International Union where he became the Public Sector Division Director. In 1986, he returned to California to assume direction of SEIU's California State Council and has continuously led the council except for taking leave in 1988 to navigate the Assembly Democratic Campaign Committee.

In his many capacities and positions with various groups, Dean Tipps has remained constant in his dedication to helping our country fulfill its responsibility to the men and women who labor in service jobs that make our lives more comfortable. He leaves grateful colleagues and a grateful membership. We are proud to add our thanks for his many years of advocacy and our congratulations for all his achievements.

THE DAILY 45: PROMISING LOYOLA
STUDENT SHOT TO DEATH

HON. BOBBY L. RUSH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 7, 2008

Mr. RUSH. Madam Speaker, everyday, 45 people, on average, are fatally shot in the United States. The recent news of the death of an aspiring journalism student at Loyola University who was killed, May 4, when someone fired shots into her car on Chicago's South Side is tragic and sad. Twenty-year-old Ishma Stewart, a 2005 graduate of Oak Park-River Forest High School, was an intelligent

young lady who completed her studies in only three years. She was expected to graduate from Loyola in December.

Another promising life cut short. Another life ended by gun violence. Another family forced to ask why their loved one, who was not involved in guns, drugs or gangs, had to leave tragically and so soon.

Americans of conscience must come together to stop the senseless death of "The Daily 45."

When will Americans say "enough is enough, stop the killings!"

NATIONAL NURSES WEEK

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 6, 2008

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 1086, a resolution recognizing the designation of May 6 through May 12, 2008 as the National Nurses Week. I commend my colleague Representative EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON for introducing this resolution and am honored to be a cosponsor of the legislation. This is an overdue resolution that recognizes the vital service that nurses provide to health of our citizens.

I need to acknowledge that it is because of the efforts of the nurses that are helping the health care system to survive in its fragile state. It is only fitting that the end of National Nurses Week is the birthday of Florence Nightingale who is the founder of modern nursing that has initiated the blossoming of about 2,500,000 registered nurses in the United States.

I would like to specifically recognize the 190,000 registered nurses in Texas for their unprecedented service tending to the needs of my State. This legislation is a testament to our Nation's ability to honor those that dedicate their lives to humanitarian causes.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution allows everyone to realize the foundational contributions that they have and continue to contribute to everyone. I would like to point out that everyone has interacted with a nurse in their lives and nurses should never be taken for granted.

Not only does this recognition honor the servants of humanity, but also paves the way for inspiration and education for those that aspire to serve in humanitarian needs. Our Nation is facing hardship through the shortage of nurses and medical care is essential to the viability of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, it is imperative for the government to recognize the importance of nurses in our country. I urge my colleagues to wholeheartedly support this resolution and other initiatives to properly recognize National Nurses Week.

COMBUSTIBLE DUST EXPLOSION AND FIRE PREVENTION ACT OF 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 30, 2008

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5522) to require the Secretary of Labor to issue interim and final occupational safety and health standards regarding worker exposure to combustible dust, and for other purposes:

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Madam Chairman, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 5522, the Combustible Dust Explosion and Fire Prevention Act. This legislation would require the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to issue rules regulating combustible industrial dusts, like sugar dust, that can build up to hazardous levels and explode.

Working families are the backbone of Minnesota and our Nation, and it is critical that all Americans to have a safe and healthy workplace. Unfortunately, due to the Bush Administration's failure in leaving worker safety in the hands of industry, OSHA has issued only one major safety standard, the fewest in its history, and killed and delayed dozens of existing and proposed regulations since President Bush took office. In 2005, over 5,700 workers were killed on the job and another 4.2 million workers were injured. It is clear that there is still a need for greater workplace protections.

A tragic example of this need occurred in early February when the Imperial Sugar refinery in Savannah, Georgia, exploded, killing thirteen people and injuring many others. When dust builds up to dangerous levels in industrial worksites, it can become fuel for fires and explosions. Combustible dust can come from many sources, such as sugar, wood, furniture, textiles, and metals, and therefore poses a risk across a number of different industries throughout the United States. There have been 281 combustible dust incidents between 1980 and 2005 that killed 119 workers and injured several others. Despite this, OSHA has failed to act to provide the necessary safety regulations.

The Combustible Dust Explosion and Fire Prevention Act (H.R. 5522) recognizes the serious hazard presented by combustible dust in American industry, and requires OSHA to issue rules regulating combustible industrial dusts. This bill sets a timeline for OSHA to respond, and requires workers to receive information and training about the hazards of combustible dusts. OSHA has known about these dangers for years, but has failed to act. Since 2001, in case after case and industry after industry, OSHA has chosen to emphasize voluntary compliance over setting strong rules and enforcing them.

Workers cannot be asked to wait any longer for these basic worker protections. The tragedy at Imperial Sugar shows that the threat of dust explosions is very real at industrial worksites across America and needs to be addressed immediately. Methods to control combustible dust hazards are well known. However, as we have tragically seen, voluntary standards are not enough. Without an OSHA

standard, many employers are unaware of the hazards of combustible dusts, while others have chosen not to adopt voluntary standards.

It is time for Congress to take action to protect American workers, because OSHA did not. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the Combustible Dust Explosion and Fire Prevention Act to save American workers from harm.

ON THE OCCASION OF THE DEDICATION OF TOLEDO BLESSED SACRAMENT NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER AND MIDDLE SCHOOL

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 7, 2008

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker. I rise today, pleased to recognize a milestone for Toledo Blessed Sacrament Catholic Parish. They celebrate the dedication of a neighborhood center and middle school.

Blessed Sacrament became the Mother Church of West Toledo, established December 31, 1924, by Father Otto C. Kappus, in the forested epicenter of western Toledo. Struggling middle-class families of the densely populated, majority Catholic residential area settled and thrived through the Great Depression and World War II. September 6, 1925, marked the laying of the cornerstone for the first church and school by Monsignor J. T. O'Connell. However, the church and school were completed in February 1926.

The Sisters of Blessed Sacrament who served the Parish in 1925 belonged to the Dominican Order. The sisters found residence originally in the school building. In 1925, there were 112 pupils enrolled, with Sister Mary Leonilla as principal and 3 assistant nuns. The 1952 enrollment was 778 pupils with 14 nuns, 2 lay teachers and Sister Helen Patrick as principal. For much of the parish's history, Dominican Sisters shepherded generations of the youth through the school. They remain much loved, greatly respected and well remembered. Their teacher successors have upheld the grand tradition.

Between 1938 and 1952, school registration increased to the point where the entire floor space, occupied as residence by the nuns, was converted to classrooms. Then, the Sisters resided at 4110 Bellevue Road until the spring of 1948, when they moved to the convent on Castlewood Drive in Toledo, OH.

Blessed Sacrament Parish experienced rapid growth in its early years. To help serve the growing congregation, a new church was constructed. It was completed in 1954 and is still in use today. The charter members chose a Southern California Spanish architectural theme that has been faithfully reflected in the new constructions. This style was remarkably suited to accommodate the liturgical reforms of the Vatican Council, but also made the addition of narthex, in the 1970s, possible. Finally, the 2008 opening of the new middle school, neighborhood center and gymnasium facility marked the newest stage in Blessed Sacrament's development.

Today, Blessed Sacrament's parish community continues to be a hallmark of hospitality and ministry to its neighbors. The parish is lively with young families and a thriving